



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

As I reflect on the 2024-2025 school year, I'm struck by the momentum and purpose driving our work at YES Prep. Coming off the celebrations of our 25th anniversary, we've entered this new chapter with a renewed focus on ensuring that every child in Houston has access to an excellent, college-prep education. The Class of 2025 celebrated 1,557 graduates, all of whom were accepted to at least one college or university and over 80% will matriculate.

We've continued to expand our footprint and deepen our impact. Last year we opened three campuses: Hobby Elementary, North Rankin Elementary, and Southwest Oaks Elementary, welcoming nearly 1,000 new students to the YES Prep family. These continued additions to the pre-K through 12th-grade pipeline are creating more opportunities than ever for students to grow, discover, and prepare for college and beyond.

Academically, our secondary schools have once again been recognized among the best in the nation. Nine of our campuses ranked within the top 10% of high schools in the country according to U.S. News & World Report, and multiple campuses earned distinctions from the College Board's AP School Honor Roll for their commitment to college readiness and student success. Our seniors continue to set a high bar for achievement—this year's graduating class earned a record 12,672 college acceptances and over \$89M in scholarships and grants. Our STAAR test results not only improved—we outpaced the state in most assessments, achieving a 3% greater increase in students performing at grade level compared to the state of Texas!

Our students' achievements go beyond the classroom. Whether winning state championships, producing award-winning art, or launching service projects that strengthen their communities, YES Prep students remind us daily of what's possible when talent meets opportunity.

These successes reflect our collective YES Prep community—our students, families, staff, and supporters—who share an unwavering belief in what every child can achieve. Your partnership makes this possible. Together, we are shaping a future where Houston's students lead with courage, creativity, and purpose.

As I begin my 25th year at YES Prep, I have never been more confident in our mission and the future that lies ahead. Thank you for standing with us as we continue to empower Houston's next generation of leaders.

In solidarity,

Mark DiBella

Mark DiBella
CEO

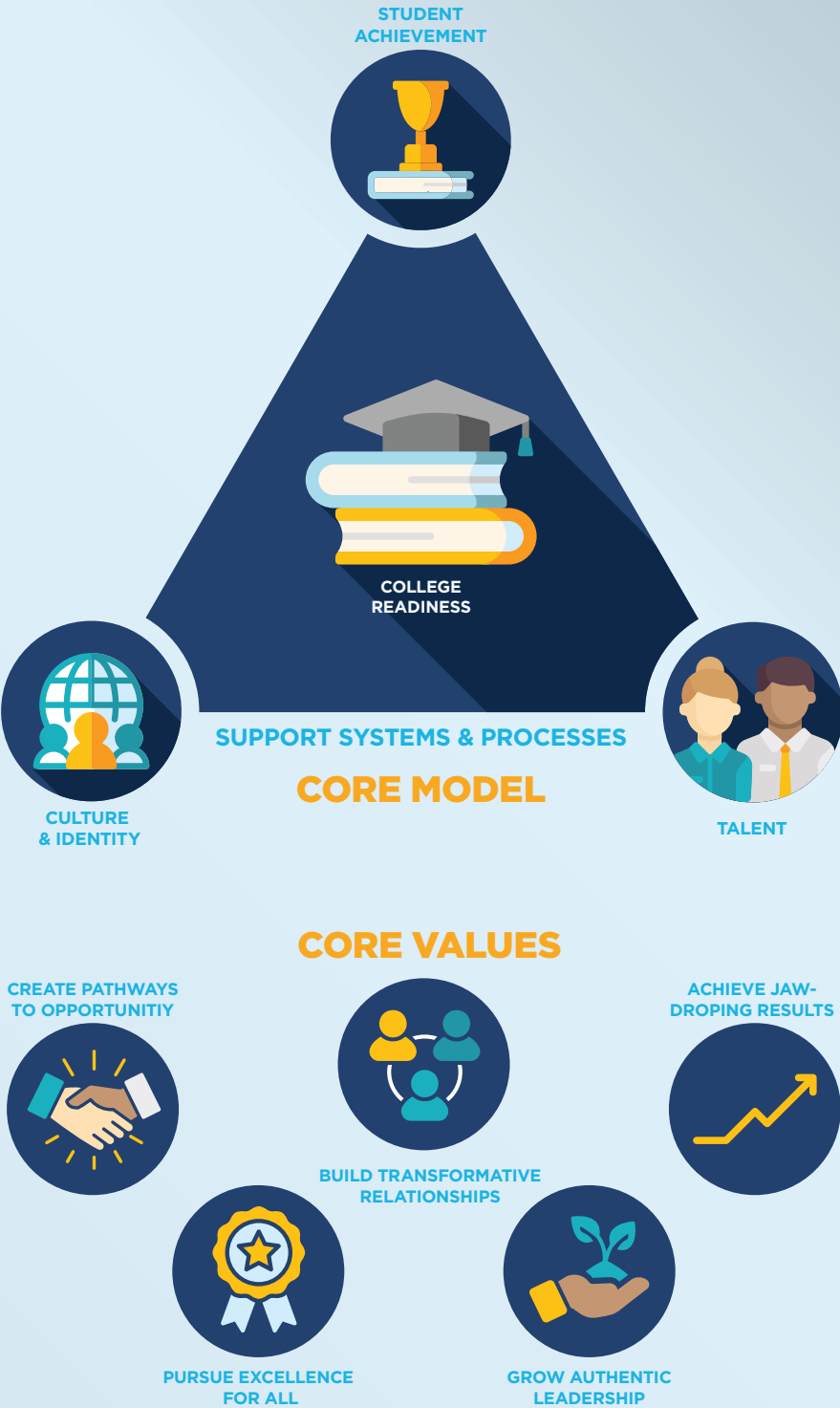


MISSION

YES Prep Public Schools empowers all Houston students to succeed in college and to pursue lives of opportunity.

VISION

Every child in Houston will have equitable access to a public school that delivers an excellent, college-ready education.



**AUTISM SPECTRUM
DISORDER ACCEPTANCE
MONTH AT YES PREP:**
*NEURODIVERSITY SPIRIT WEEK
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS*

In April, YES Prep elementary schools celebrated Autism Acceptance Month through a joyful and purposeful Neurodiversity Spirit Week. Students, staff, and families engaged in themed dress-up days, sensory-friendly enrichment stations, and classroom activities that promoted inclusion, understanding, and empathy. Signature events like North Rankin Elementary’s “Drip in Blue” and family-focused gatherings such as North Central Elementary’s Autism Night reflected the district’s year-round commitment to supporting students with autism and honoring the value of neurodiversity across our school communities.



**SOUTHWEST SECONDARY
ALUM BRYCE TURNER**

Class of 2023 graduate of YES Prep Southwest Secondary, Bryce Turner exemplifies the power of belief, resilience, and inclusive education. Diagnosed with autism as a toddler, Bryce overcame early developmental challenges to graduate with a 3.8 GPA, earn over \$200,000 in scholarships, and thrive at Huston-Tillotson University, where he made history as the first openly autistic member of his Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. chapter. Supported by dedicated teachers and a strong Special Education program at YES Prep, Bryce’s journey reflects the impact of individualized support, community partnership, and family advocacy. His story continues to inspire students with disabilities and promote a culture of acceptance and achievement across our schools.



**YES PREP NORTH RANKIN SECOND
GRADERS DISCOVER NATURE**

Second-grade students at YES Prep North Rankin Elementary embarked on a hands-on learning adventure at the Kluge Stormwater Detention Basin, where they explored bird migration, environmental conservation, and flood protection. Equipped with binoculars, students identified native birds and discovered how infrastructure can support both community safety and wildlife habitats. This immersive field trip, supported by the Harris County Flood Control District, brought science lessons to life and exemplified YES Prep’s commitment to experiential learning and community partnerships.



YES PREP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DESIGNQUEST

At Design Quest 2025, YES Prep high school students teamed up to solve real-world problems through design thinking and innovation. Held at the Spindletop Center, the event featured a career panel, collaborative workshops, and a final pitch session where students presented solutions ranging from visual campaigns to tech-driven ideas. With guidance from industry mentors and support from Spindletop Community Impact Partners, the experience empowered students to think creatively, work collaboratively, and explore career pathways—all hallmarks of YES Prep’s commitment to hands-on learning.





TEACHER INCENTIVE ALLOTMENT

The program is funded by the Texas Education Agency and supported by YES Prep's robust Teacher Pathway evaluation. With up to \$32,000 in additional compensation over five years, TIA-designated teachers are recognized for their impact on student growth and instructional excellence. This program is celebrated at events like the Level Up Luau—an annual celebration of YES Prep's highest performing teachers. As of 2024, over 100 teachers hold a TIA designation, reinforcing YES Prep's commitment to teacher development, retention, and student success across all campuses.

EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT: DIEGO ROMAN

As a Level IV (the highest level of the Teacher Pathway) and TIA Exemplary teacher at YES Prep North Central Elementary, Diego Roman brings deep personal experience and academic expertise to his fourth-grade bilingual math, science, and social studies classroom. A former English learner himself, Roman is passionate about empowering students through culturally responsive instruction and real-world connections. His commitment to closing academic gaps and supporting English language development has earned him statewide recognition and inspired a generation of bilingual learners. Through YES Prep's strong coaching culture and investment in teacher growth, Roman continues to thrive while transforming outcomes for the community he proudly serves.



SUCCESS AFTER YES FAIR

YES Prep's 18th Annual Success After YES: College & Career Pathways Fair welcomed more than 3,300 juniors and seniors to explore postsecondary options with over 100 colleges, universities, trade unions, and service organizations. Held during the school day to ensure equitable access, the event reflects YES Prep's commitment to college readiness and career exploration for all students. From admissions reps to technical program leaders, partners praised the ambition and preparedness of YES Prep students. By spotlighting diverse pathways—college, vocational training, military paths and more—the fair empowers students to pursue a future aligned with their goals and passions.

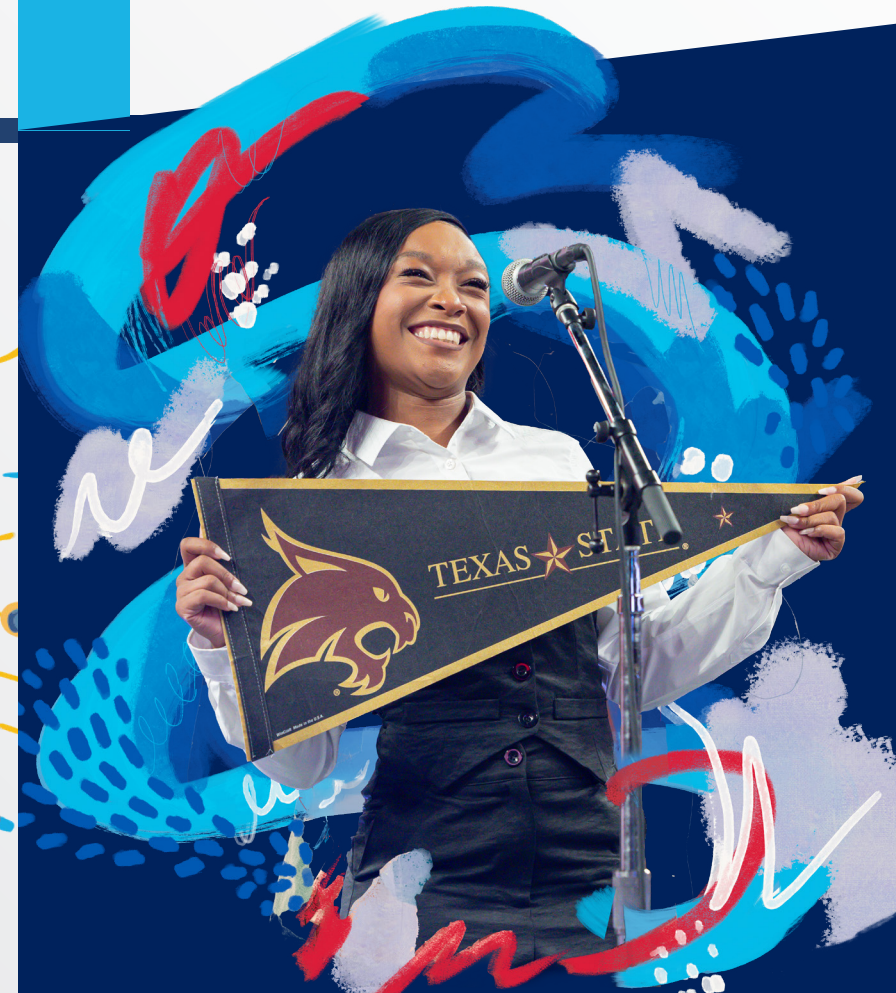


SENIOR SIGNING DAY

2025 PRESENTED BY

ConocoPhillips

On May 21, 2025, over 1,500 seniors from 14 YES Prep campuses—including the first graduating class of YES Prep Northwest Secondary—took the stage at the University of Houston's Fertitta Center for the 25th Annual Senior Signing Day. With ConocoPhillips as the event's first-ever presenting sponsor, students proudly declared their next steps—college, military, or career—before thousands of cheering families, staff, and peers. The Class of 2025 earned over 12,000 college acceptances and secured \$89 million in scholarships and grants, reflecting a quarter-century of YES Prep's unwavering commitment to expanding opportunity and student success.





YES PREP STUDENTS SHINE AT HAMUN 50: A MODEL UN EXPERIENCE

YES Prep Northwest Secondary students made their debut at the 50th Houston Area Model United Nations (HAMUN), joining over 1,300 participants from across the region. Representing countries like Mexico, the five-student delegation tackled real-world global issues, strengthened their public speaking and negotiation skills, and gained firsthand experience in international diplomacy. Supported by weekly club meetings and academic coursework, the students stepped out of their comfort zones and into leadership roles—marking a milestone for YES Prep’s commitment to expanding enriching, college-ready experiences beyond the classroom.

2025 JUNIOR SPRING TRIPS

Each spring, YES Prep’s Junior Spring Trip (JST) gives 11th-grade students the opportunity to explore colleges across the country—this year spanning Texas, Louisiana, Minnesota, and California. More than a tour, JST helps students experience college life firsthand, ask meaningful questions, and envision their futures. Guided by college counselors and teachers, students engaged with admissions staff, connected with alumni, and discovered campuses that matched their academic, cultural, and personal needs. By making the college experience real and accessible, JST plays a pivotal role in building confidence, sparking ambition, and preparing students for life beyond high school.

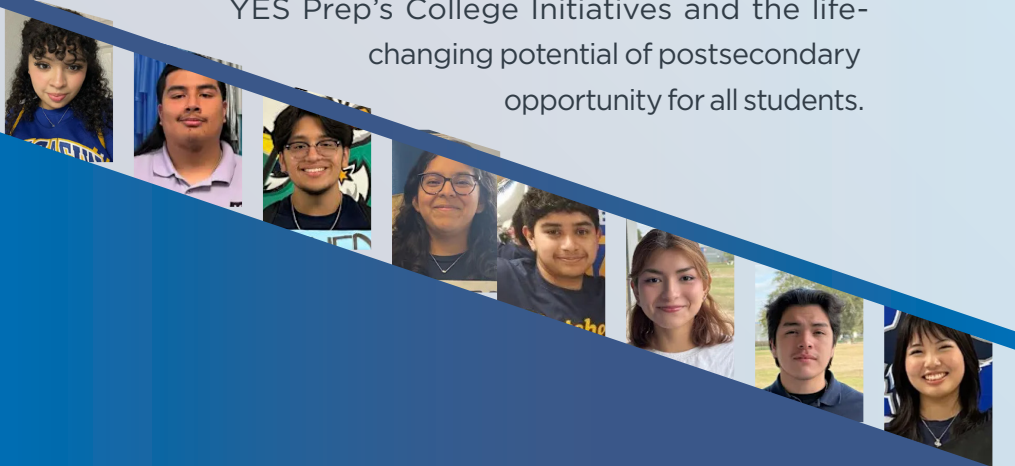


QUEST BRIDGE



QUESTBRIDGE WINNERS

This year, 16 YES Prep seniors were selected as QuestBridge Scholars, earning full four-year scholarships to some of the nation’s most prestigious colleges and universities—including MIT, Columbia, University of Chicago, Vanderbilt, Rice, and more. Through the QuestBridge National College Match program, these remarkable students were recognized for their academic excellence, leadership, and resilience. Representing campuses across the YES Prep network, each scholar exemplifies the power of access, support, and high expectations. Their success reflects the impact of YES Prep’s College Initiatives and the life-changing potential of postsecondary opportunity for all students.



POSSE SCHOLARS

Ten outstanding YES Prep seniors were named 2025 Posse Scholars, earning full-tuition scholarships to top-tier institutions including Bryn Mawr, Carleton, Colby, and Oberlin Colleges. Selected for their leadership, academic excellence, and community impact, these students will attend college as part of supportive cohorts, benefiting from pre-collegiate training and ongoing mentorship. From future engineers and doctors to advocates for social justice and nonprofit leadership, this year’s Posse Scholars reflect the strength, ambition, and potential of YES Prep graduates as they prepare to lead and serve on campuses and beyond.

YES PREP ATHLETICS – BUILDING CHAMPIONS + LEADERSHIP

Athletics continue to thrive at YES Prep, where student-athletes compete with heart and purpose in the Honor Charter Athletics League (HCAL). From regional football titles to top-four finishes in cross country, YES Prep teams made their mark this year with outstanding performances across multiple campuses. Leading the charge is Tiffany Steele, the new Director of Athletic Programs, who brings a student-centered, growth-driven vision to the role. Under her leadership, athletics are more than just competition—they're a platform for building confidence, discipline, and leadership. With opportunities across all seasons and a strong connection to college readiness, YES Prep's athletic programs help students thrive both on and off the field.



SOUTHEAST SECONDARY GRILL DAY

At YES Prep Southeast Secondary, the AP Capstone program is redefining what it means to prepare students for college—and for life. This year's Grill Day invited AP Seminar and AP Research students to present their education reform proposals to district leaders and professionals from NASA, IBM, Deloitte, and the College Board. Modeled after Shark Tank, students received real-time feedback on complex topics, developing skills in public speaking, collaboration, and research. The event embodies YES Prep's commitment to student agency and project-based learning, with 97% of students earning a 3 or higher on their AP exams—outperforming global averages. Under the leadership of Dean of Instruction Michael Buck and a dedicated team, Grill Day is more than an academic showcase—it's a platform where students see themselves as changemakers.



CREATIVITY UNLEASHED- THE POWER OF ARTS

This year's Fine Arts Showcase brought together over 500 families, staff, and community members to celebrate the artistic talents of 465 students from all 15 YES Prep secondary campuses. The event featured visual art, digital media, theater, music, and dance. More than just a display of talent, the showcase fostered student confidence, expression, and community connection. As YES Prep continues to grow its arts programming, the annual showcase remains a powerful reminder of how creativity supports personal growth and prepares students for success beyond the classroom.



TEXAS CAPITOL TRIP 2025

This spring, 61 YES Prep high school students traveled to Austin for Capitol Day 2025—a powerful experience in civic engagement, policymaking, and advocacy. Led by YES Prep's Advocacy Team and Teacher Advocacy Captains, students toured the Texas Capitol, participated in Q&A sessions with lawmakers, and held meetings with legislative offices on key education issues. For the first time, YES Prep expanded the event to include other charter networks, strengthening collective impact and elevating student voices. Capitol Day continues to empower students with the tools, confidence, and agency to influence the policies shaping their education.



YES PREP EXPANDS AND OPENS NEW ELEMENTARIES

In August 2024, YES Prep opened three new elementary campuses—Hobby, North Rankin, and Southwest Oaks—welcoming over 3,000 pre-K through second-grade students in high-need Houston neighborhoods. This expansion reflects YES Prep’s mission to provide high-quality, tuition-free public education and early college preparation starting in elementary school. Each campus will grow to serve grades pre-K–5 and feed directly into YES Prep secondary schools. During the previous school year, YES Prep served 19,576 students across 24 campuses, with plans to open two additional campuses during the 2025-2026 school year.



HOORAY FOR OUR LUNCH HEROES AND COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS WITH K-9 UNITS

On National Lunch Hero Day, May 2, 2025, YES Prep campuses honored the essential work of our Child Nutrition teams with heartfelt celebrations and a unique twist—visits from the Houston and Humble Police Department K-9 units. At Southside Elementary and North Central Elementary, students enjoyed meet-and-greets with officers and their canine partners while expressing gratitude to the cafeteria staff who keep them nourished every day. With messages of appreciation, shared meals, and joyful interactions, the day highlighted the vital connection between nutrition, student success, and community partnership.



On March 6, 2025, YES Prep celebrated the 20th Annual YES Prep Energy Texas Hold 'Em Tournament—one of Houston’s most impactful philanthropic traditions. Held at The Corinthian Houston, this milestone event brought together over 600 energy professionals and more than 80 sponsoring companies, all united in support of YES Prep students. Since its founding in 2006, the tournament has raised over \$24 million to expand access to high-quality public education. This year’s tournament added \$2.1 million to that legacy, reinforcing the energy industry’s steadfast commitment to educational opportunity. The event’s continued success is thanks to the leadership of the tournament’s Steering Committee and the generosity of industry partners who are helping shape Houston’s future—one hand, and one student, at a time.



YES PREP PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EIGHTH ANNUAL LUNCHEON

On October 24, 2024, YES Prep hosted over 400 guests at the Wortham Theater Center for its Eighth Annual Leading Houston Forward Luncheon, raising a record-breaking \$1.2 million. Event chairs Shirley and Brian Colona helped lead the effort, supporting YES Prep’s mission to prepare every student for college and beyond. Alumna Luly Castillo (‘01) received the Alumni Legacy Award for her leadership and impact, while H-E-B was honored with the Chris Barbic Legacy Award for more than two decades of support. A student fireside chat and keynote by alumna Mayra Valle (‘10) showcased the lasting impact of YES Prep’s community, vision, and commitment to student success.



SYSTEM LEADERSHIP



Mark DiBella
Chief Executive Officer



Isy Gabriela Castillo
Chief External Officer



Carmen Darville
Chief Operations Officer



Dana Foughty
Chief of Staff



Luis Mena
Chief Financial Officer



Jose (Tony) Muñoz
Chief Talent Officer



Phillip Wright
Chief Schools Officer

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Cathryn and Doug Selman

Rev. Leslie Smith II and Dr. Monica Simmons-Smith

Karen Stallings

Margaret Vaughan Cox

Ann and Richard Vaughan

Dr. Ann Ziker

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR STATS



12,672
college acceptances



\$16M
donated to support
YES Prep students



14,497
enrollment applications
received



19,576
YES Prep students



1,557
graduating seniors



3%
greater increase in students
performing at grade level on
STAAR tests compared
to the state of Texas



745
YES Prep donors



\$89M
in college scholarships
and grants



9

secondary campuses ranked
in top 10% nationally by US
News & World Report



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